

REAL CHANGE FOR AMERICA

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, today it begins: the process of turning the rhetoric of hope into the reality of change. Today we will enfranchise 4 million children with health insurance, many of whose working-poor parents have had to watch their children suffering in bed from an accident or an illness not knowing how serious it is or what to do, only knowing that they couldn't afford to find out.

Now, we have passed this legislation before—twice—only to have it vetoed by President Bush. Why? Because we paid for it with a tobacco tax, which, in itself over the years, will save the lives of millions of people.

But this bill that we pass today will be signed into legislation because that's exactly what President Barack Obama meant when he promised real change for all Americans.

CONGRATULATIONS GATOR NATION

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, once again I come to the House floor to honor the accomplishment of the University of Florida Gators. On Thursday night, the Gators won their second BCS national football championship in the past 3 years by beating a very good Oklahoma team 24-14. Add to this the back-to-back basketball championships in 2006 and 2007, Gainesville is quickly becoming known as the "City of Champions."

In their hard-fought victory, the Gators' defense was able to hold Oklahoma—the highest scoring team in modern football history—to 14 points and 363 total yards. On offense, Tim Tebow showed why he is perhaps the best quarterback in the history of college football by finishing with 231 yards passing and 109 yards rushing. Tebow becomes just the fifth player since 1950 to win two national titles and the Heisman Trophy.

I congratulate Coach Urban Meyer and all of the Gator football players for their incredible accomplishments.

Go Gators.

TODAY IS A GOOD DAY FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES

(Ms. SCHWARTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, today is a good day for American families. Today, we reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program for nearly 7 million children currently covered and to expand coverage to an additional 4 million uninsured children.

My commitment to ensuring health coverage for every child in our great Nation is just as strong today as it was in 1992 when I successfully worked for the early creation of CHIP in Pennsylvania. Yet today, 9 million children are still uninsured—almost 140,000 children in Pennsylvania alone—and the number grows daily.

As the economy continues to suffer and unemployment grows, more and more American families are losing their insurance coverage. Parents without coverage worry that their children will get sick or need to visit the doctor, and they simply do not have the money to pay. So as we work to reverse the economic downturn, we can and we should ensure that our children's health will be protected now and into the future.

Strengthening CHIP for 111 million children is the right thing to do, and in just 6 days, we will have a President who—unlike our outgoing President—will sign this bill and achieve this goal for America's children.

Change is here. It is a good day in America.

SUPPORT AMERICA'S FUTURE BY PASSING SCHIP LEGISLATION

(Mr. WALZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALZ. Madam Speaker, I, too, rise in support of SCHIP legislation. At a time when million of Americans are losing their jobs and companies are doing everything possible to cut costs, more and more families face the horrible prospect of going without health insurance.

During these uncertain economic times, this Congress should invest in those most vulnerable and hardest hit. For the past 11 years, the Children's Health Insurance Program has done exactly that by reducing the number of uninsured children by providing them access to private health insurance. Without this coverage, many of these children would go without critical health care attention that allows them to live productive and prosperous lives.

Over the last 2 years, this Congress has worked to expand the program by 4 million children. Twice we passed bipartisan legislation that was vetoed by President Bush. But now we have another opportunity to ensure those 11 million children. President-elect Obama has promised to sign this legislation.

Today, this Congress should once again do what's right and help support America's children and our future.

MONEY SPENT ON SCHIP IS MONEY WELL SPENT

(Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, today the House will debate and pass legislation to extend health

care to 4 million more American children.

In the richest country in the world, it simply defies our national conscience to allow any child to go to sleep in his bed at night sick just because his parents can't afford to bring him to a doctor. These kids don't deserve this fate and frankly, neither do their parents because three-fourths of the uninsured come from families with a full-time worker who just happens to work for a company that doesn't or can't provide health care.

The Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act will give States the confidence they need to improve their health care systems and increase outreach to ensure that all eligible kids have coverage.

This is money well spent. Insuring kids is the right thing to do from both a moral and financial standpoint. It is time for the House to do what it's done twice before and pass legislation that will get 4 million more kids the health care they deserve.

SCHIP LEGISLATION IS VITAL LEGISLATION

(Ms. SPEIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker and Members, it is a remarkable day today because we will vote to insure 11 million American children. But the real question is, do we want to continue to be a third world country because we are the only industrialized Nation in the world that does not provide health care to its children.

Twice our outgoing President has vetoed similar bills. But what is the cost of not providing medical coverage to our children? What is the cost of routine medical conditions clogging our emergency rooms? What is the cost of healthy children sharing classrooms and playgrounds with classmates afflicted with undiagnosed and untreated contagious diseases?

Nearly three-quarters of the uninsured children qualify for Medicaid or SCHIP but are not enrolled. And with job losses, multiplying at a record pace, these numbers will only increase.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure because simply put, we cannot afford not to.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO EXPAND HEALTH CARE COVERAGE TO CHILDREN

(Mr. McMAHON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McMAHON. Madam Speaker and my colleagues, as my eloquent colleague from California just pointed out, the United States is the only developed Nation in the world that does not provide health care for all of our children.

Today, millions of children from modest-income families are not regularly seeing a doctor because they are